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ABSTRACT

This brief report contains basic data on the management of pupils' school time in European primary and secondary education. A wide range of aspects are covered, including the duration of compulsory education, the organization of the school year, the distribution of holidays, and daily and weekly timetables. A description is given of each of these, together with a comparative picture illustrated by graphs. The countries profiled include: (1) Belgium; (2) Denmark; (3) Germany; (4) Greece; (5) Spain; (6) France; (7) Ireland; (8) Italy; (9) Luxembourg; (10) the Netherlands; (11) Austria; (12) Portugal; (13) Finland; (14) Sweden; and (15) the United Kingdom. The European Economic Area (EEA) countries included are Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. (EH)

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European Commission
DG XXII: Education,
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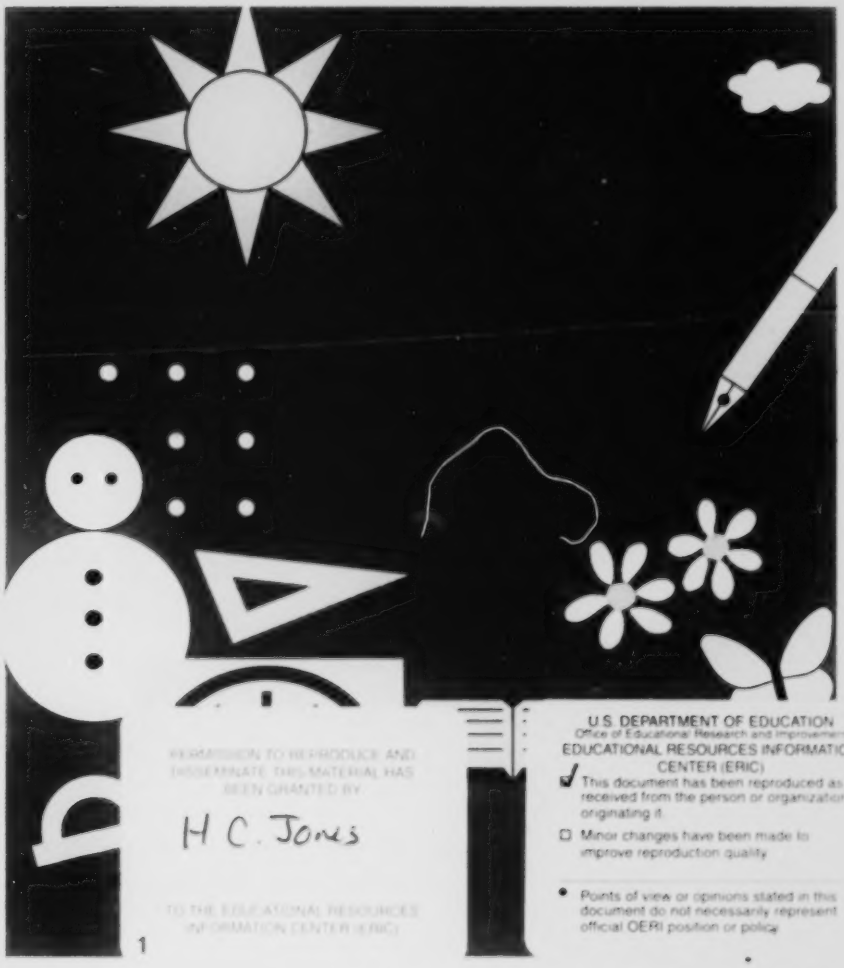
ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL TIME IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



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The European Education Information Network

European Commission
DG XXII: Education,
Training and Youth

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SECOND EDITION

(1995)

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FOREWORD

The organisation and use of school time is one aspect of the more general problem of improving the quality of education and combating school failure. In effect, we now know the extent to which attempts to match the management of school time to children's natural bio-rhythms can have a positive influence on pupils' performance in school and contribute to the general effectiveness of the education system.

The reorganisation of school time is a regular subject of studies and reforms in several Member States, with a view to taking more account of time factors which have a favourable influence on children's education. Moreover, the pressure of certain socio-economic phenomena such as the increase in the female participation rate in employment is obliging some countries to make arrangements for the care of children in school both before and after school hours.

In response to an increasingly insistent demand for information on the question and aware of the interest of Member States in the related problems, DG XXII of the European Commission has supported the regular production by EURYDICE of information on it. A first edition was published in 1993 and the present document represents its updating and expansion. The information relates to the 1994/95 school year and covers the situation in the education systems in the 15 Member States of the European Union and in Iceland and Norway.[1]

This publication contains basic data on the situation regarding the management of pupils' school time in both primary and secondary education. A wide range of aspects are covered: the duration of compulsory education, the organisation of the school year, the distribution of holidays, and daily and weekly timetables. A fairly detailed description is given of each of these, together with a comparative picture illustrated by graphs.

In preparing this document, the EURYDICE network hopes both to provide all those concerned in education with a better understanding of the situation in Europe and also to have produced a useful working tool for those studying this question.

In view of the frequency with which changes are made in the organisation of school time, EURYDICE will ensure that this document is regularly updated so that it meets the needs of the education world for reliable information.

Luce Pépin
Head of the EURYDICE European Unit

October 1995

[1] Under the Agreement on the European Economic Area, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are participating in the activities of the EURYDICE network in the same way as the Member States of the European Union. This document does not yet include information on Liechtenstein.

Compulsory education

In most countries of the European Union, the starting age for compulsory education is 5 or 6 years. In Northern Ireland, compulsory primary education now starts at age 4, and in Luxembourg, it has recently been made compulsory for 4-year-olds to attend nursery school. At the other extreme, in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, compulsory education does not start until age 7. This is also the case in Norway.

In general, compulsory education lasts 9 or 11 years. It is shortest (8 years) in Italy and Spain (before the reform introduced under the law of 1990 - *LOGSE*). It lasts 12 years in Northern Ireland and in Belgium, taking into account the years of compulsory part-time education in the latter country. In Germany, compulsory education usually also lasts 12 years, comprising 9 or 10 years of full-time schooling in general education schools and 3 years of part-time schooling in vocational schools (only if the pupils do not attend a general or vocational school on a full-time basis after the 9 or 10 years of compulsory general education). The Netherlands provides the longest compulsory education, between the ages of 5 and 18 years, including again the years of part-time education.

The school year

There are differences between the education systems in the European Union as regards the distribution of school time and holidays over the year, the point of time at which pupils start a new school year, and whether or not the holiday periods are fixed at central government level.

The annual number of days of teaching officially prescribed in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries varies from 160 in Iceland to 214 in Austria (6-day week system) in primary education, and from 155/160 in Iceland to 216 in Luxembourg in secondary education.

Similarly, calculation of the annual number of class hours gives more strictly comparable information about the time pupils spend in class in the European Union. At the level of primary education for which it was calculated, it appears that the annual taught time of pupils in one Member State can be up to double that in another. Most countries have a shorter day for the youngest pupils at the start of their schooling, except in Belgium, Spain, France, Luxembourg and Portugal, where the number of periods does not vary according to the age of the pupils. In Sweden, 7-year-olds are in class for less than 500 hours, while in Luxembourg their contemporaries are there for 936 hours. Comparison reveals considerable variation, between these two extremes. The range is however slightly less wide in the course of primary education.

The summer holidays vary between about 6 weeks (in Germany, the Netherlands at primary level, England and Wales, and Scotland) and 12/13 weeks (in Greece at primary level, in Spain and Ireland at secondary level, and also in Iceland throughtout the period of compulsory education). In certain Member States, the summer holidays are longer at secondary level. This is the case in Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands.

After the summer holidays, schools reopen over a period of 6 weeks, running from the beginning of August (in Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland and certain of the German *Länder*) to the second fortnight of September (in Spain, at secondary level, and in Luxembourg and Portugal). Moreover, in some Member States, all pupils return to school on the same day, while in others there can be a variety of dates within the same country.

In the course of the school year, pupils in all Member States of the European Union, and in Iceland and Norway amongst the EFTA/EEA countries, have about 2 weeks' holiday at Christmas. In most of them, the long first term is broken by a week's holiday in the autumn, towards the end of October or the beginning of November.

The picture is however more varied in the second term of the school year. Greek, Irish, Italian, Scottish and also Icelandic children have no consistent holiday in this term. In the other countries, there is a holiday in the month of February or March. This may, moreover, be very short (1 to 3 days) or longer (1 to 2 weeks).

There is traditionally a longer holiday at Easter, except in France and the Netherlands, where this holiday does not necessarily coincide with the movable date of Easter proper. This is a recent change based on a desire to give children a more balanced distribution of periods of teaching and holidays over the year.

In Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, and England and Wales, the third term is also broken by a few days of holiday.

The school week

In all Member States of the European Union and in the EFTA/EEA countries, Sunday is a non-school day. The most common pattern of school week is five days, except in Luxembourg where it is still six days. In some countries, schools may choose between a 5-day week and a 6-day week, depending on the local situation and after consultation with parents. Where the 5-day week operates, children generally attend school from Monday to Friday, except in France, in the primary schools, where the majority of pupils are off all day on Wednesday and then attend school on Saturday morning. However, an increasing number of schools in that country are introducing a 4-day week pattern of organisation, which was made possible by a Decree approved in 1991. This arrangement makes it possible to gain from the school holidays an extra 12 days for teaching purposes.

There are several methods of determining the weekly number of hours of teaching in primary schools. Either a set or a minimum number of class periods is prescribed, or regulations stipulate the overall daily total of teaching time. The length of the teaching period is left to the teacher's discretion or varies from 40 minutes to an hour, depending on the country.

On the other hand, in lower secondary education, the organisation of school time is generally more structured and its division into periods varies from 40 to 50/55 minutes, depending on the country. Italy and Finland are out of line with this trend, with lessons one hour long. Ireland and the United Kingdom (except Scotland) also share one characteristic which should be mentioned: lessons there are the shortest (35 to 40 minutes), but they have the greatest number of them. In upper secondary education, the maximum number of periods a week varies depending on the group of subjects being studied and is generally higher in the technical and vocational sections.

The school day

The pupil's school day varies greatly from one Member State to another. There are basically two quite different patterns, both of which may be found in the same country. Some countries have chosen half-day schooling, with all lessons given in one half of the day. This is typical of Germany, Greece, Austria and of some school zones in Italy. Here, classes are usually held in the morning. The provision of education to different groups of pupils in the morning and in the afternoon, on a shift basis, is resorted to in some schools in Greece and those schools in Portugal and Iceland where there is a shortage of accommodation. Whole-day schooling with a break in the middle of the day is found in all the other countries.

The length of the lunch break is another respect in which the systems differ; it may be quite short or last several hours. Depending on the country, the two-session pattern applies either on all five days of the school week or on four days out of five, with one day reduced to a morning. In Luxembourg, the week is organised on the basis of alternate whole days and mornings.

Another distinguishing feature of the school systems in the European Union and in the EFTA/EEA countries is the time at which pupils start their day. In effect, while classes start between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. in several countries, in Austria and in some *Länder* of Germany, and also in Norway, they may start earlier. In Portugal, the school's education council can set the starting time for classes between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. in the first stage of "basic education".

Provision for pupils out of school hours

With the increasing number of families in which both parents are out at work, primary schools are increasingly finding themselves called upon to provide care and supervision for children outside of school hours. Analysis of the opening hours of schools and of child-minding services indicates considerable diversity in the types of organisation chosen in this area. Few regulations have been introduced, and where services are organised, they are often left to the initiative of the schools. For this reason, various types of provision may be found within the same country. In most cases, schools open a short time before classes begin.

In some Member States - Belgium, Denmark, Greece and Germany, in some schools, - and in Iceland amongst the EFTA/EEA countries, children can be looked after in the school for more than half an hour before classes begin.

In several countries, it is possible for children to remain after school for either homework classes or some form of care and supervision in their own school. Such arrangements are however exceptional in Spain, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Scotland.

TABLE I - DURATION OF FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION

MEMBER STATE	AGES	
BELGIUM	6 to 15/16 years	(1)
DENMARK	7 to 16 years	
GERMANY	6 to 15/16 years	(2)
GREECE	6 to 15 years	(3)
SPAIN	6 to 14/16 years	(4)
FRANCE	6 to 16 years	
IRELAND	6 to 15 years	
ITALY	6 to 14 years	
LUXEMBOURG	4 to 15 years	(5)
NETHERLANDS	5 to 16 years	(6)
AUSTRIA	6 to 15 years	(7)
PORTUGAL	6 to 14/15 years	(8)
FINLAND	7 to 16 years	(9)
SWEDEN	7 to 16 years	(10)
UNITED KINGDOM		
England and Wales	5 to 16 years	(11)
Northern Ireland	4 to 16 years	(12)
Scotland	5 to 16 years	(13)
ICELAND	6 to 16 years	
NORWAY	7 to 16 years	(14)

(1) Compulsory schooling is full-time until the age of 15 or 16 at the most and includes at least six years' primary education and at least the first two years of full-time secondary education. Full-time compulsory education is followed by a period of part-time compulsory schooling until the age of 18.

(2) For the *Länder* of Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen and North Rhine-Westphalia, 10 years' compulsory full-time general education.
For those who do not remain at school full-time (in a general or vocational secondary school) after the first 9 or 10 years of schooling, part-time vocational education is compulsory (3 years on average, depending on the length of the training period for a recognised trade or other occupation, entry to which is by way of apprenticeship).

(3) Initial enrolment is possible from the age of 5 years 8 months, i.e. children may be enrolled if their sixth birthday falls on or before 31 December of the year in question.
By law, a pupil who does not successfully complete lower secondary school by 15 is obliged to stay on until the age of 16.

(4) The education reform law of 1990 (Basic Law on the General Structures and Organisation of the Education System - *LOGSE*) has extended compulsory education by raising the minimum school leaving age from 14 to 16. However, the old provisions will remain in force until the new structure under the *LOGSE* is completely in place.

(5) The first two years of compulsory education relate to pre-school education; primary education starts at age 6. The lowering of the compulsory starting age from 5 to 4 years has applied since the beginning of the 1993/94 school year.

(6) Every child must attend school full-time from the first school day of the month following its fifth birthday. Full-time education is compulsory until the end of the school year in which the pupil reaches the age of 16 or has completed at least 12 full years of schooling. A pupil who has not reached the age of 18 (a minor) is still bound to attend part-time compulsory schooling for one year.

(7) Compulsory education starts on 1 September following the child's sixth birthday and lasts nine years.

(8) The provisions relating to the raising of the school leaving age to 15 years apply to pupils enrolled in the first year of "basic education" in the 1987/88 school year and to those who first enrol in the following school years (Comprehensive Law on the Education System - 1986).

(9) Compulsory education ends when a child has successfully completed the *peruskoulu/grundskola* (nine years, from age 7 to 16) or equivalent studies.

(10) Since 1991, children have a right to start school at the age of six years, if their parents so desire and if the municipality has the capacity to provide this opportunity. The option should be available in all municipalities by the school year 1997/98.

(11) In England and Wales, the compulsory school age is from 5 to 16. All children must receive appropriate full-time education, by regular attendance at school or otherwise, from the beginning of the school term which follows their fifth birthday. At present, pupils who reach the age of 16 before 31 January in an academic year may leave school at Easter; those who reach 16 between 1 February and 31 August may leave on the Friday before the last Monday in May. It is intended to introduce a single School Leaving Date in 1996/97.

(12) The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 lowered the age for the beginning of compulsory education from 5 years to 4 years. With effect from the 1992/93 school year, pupils who reach the age of 16 on or before 1 July may leave school on 30 June of that year. Those who reach the age of 16 between 1 July and 31 August must remain at school for the whole of the following year, that is, until 30 June.

(13) There are two statutory leaving dates in the school year. Those pupils whose 16th birthday falls between 1 October and the last day of February may leave at the end of the first term, i.e. at the start of the Christmas holidays. Those who are 16 between 1 March and 30 September may leave on 31 May of that year.

(14) An education reform law is lowering the age for the beginning of compulsory education from 7 years to 6 years in 1996/97.

DURATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

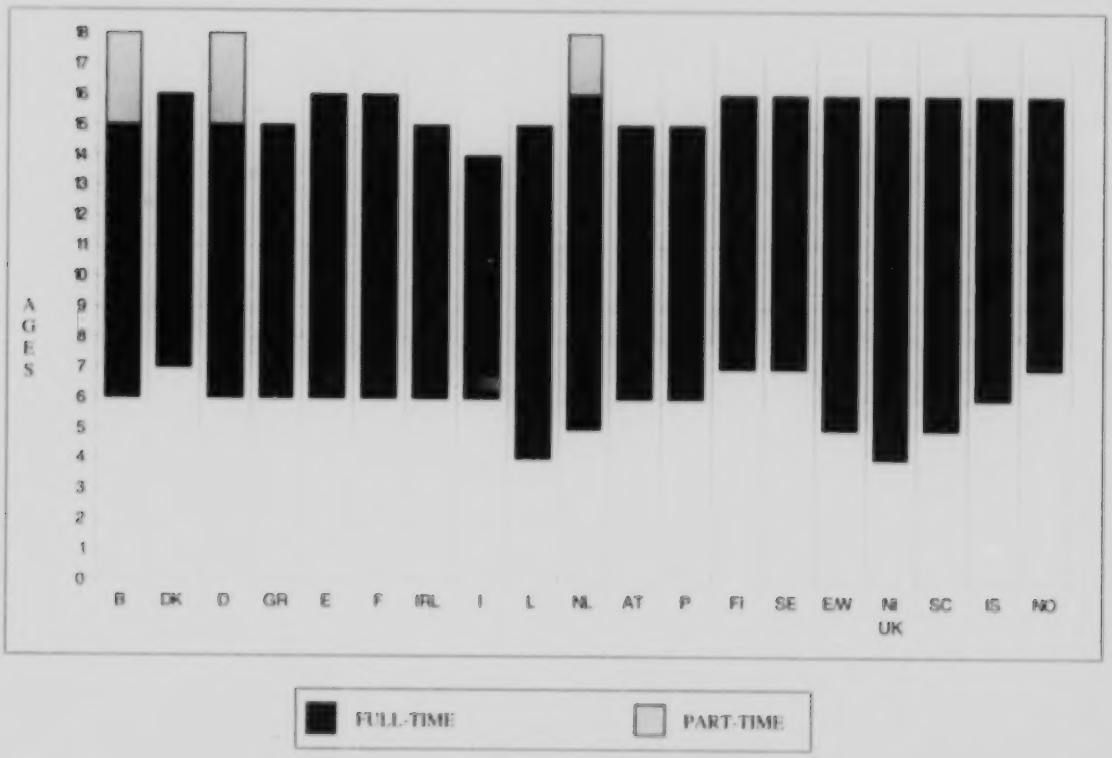

TABLE II - LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	PRIMARY EDUCATION *		SECONDARY EDUCATION	
	Beginning	End	Beginning	End
BELGIUM French and Flemish Communities German-speaking Community	1 September end of August	30 June beginning of July	1 September end of August	30 June beginning of July
DENMARK (1)	2nd Monday in August	around 20 June	2nd Monday in August	around 20 June
GERMANY (2)	1 August	31 July	1 August	31 July
GREECE	11 September	15 June	1 September (3)	30 June
SPAIN	1st fortnight of September	end of June	2nd fortnight of September	30 June
FRANCE	1st week of September	end of June	1st fortnight of September	end of June
IRELAND (4)	1 September	end of June	1 September	end of May
ITALY (5)	10 September	30 June	10 September	30 June
LUXEMBOURG	around 15 September	15 July	around 15 September	15 July
NETHERLANDS (6)	1 August	31 July	1 August	31 July
AUSTRIA	First or second Monday in September - varying in the eastern *Länder* (Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland) and western *Länder*	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: on the Friday falling between 27 June at the earliest and 3 July at the latest; in all other *Länder*: on the Friday falling between 4 July at the earliest and 10 July at the latest.	First or second Monday (general secondary school) or Wednesday (intermediate and upper secondary schools) in September varying in the eastern *Länder* (Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland) and the western *Länder*. (7)	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: on the Friday falling between 27 June at the earliest and 3 July at the latest; all other *Länder*: on the Friday falling between 4 July at the earliest and 10 July at the latest. (7)
PORTUGAL	15/20 September	26/30 June	15/20 September	26/30 June (8)
FINLAND (9)	1 August	31 July	1 August	31 July
SWEDEN (10)	end of August	beginning of June	end of August	beginning of June
UNITED KINGDOM England and Wales (11) Northern Ireland (12) Scotland (13)	 1st week of September beginning of September 3rd week of August	 3rd week of July end of June beginning of July	 1st week of September beginning of September 3rd week of August	 3rd week of July end of June beginning of July
ICELAND (14)	1 September	31 May	1 September	31 May
NORWAY	second half of August	second half of June	second half of August	second half of June

* Primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure in Denmark (*folkeskole*), Finland (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), Sweden (*grundskola*), Iceland (*grunnskóli*) and Norway (*grunnskole*). In Portugal, first stage of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

(1) Officially the school year runs from 1 August of one year to 31 July of the following year. The local education authorities are free to fix their school holidays, with the exception of the first day of the summer holidays.

(2) In Germany, the summer holidays (of about 6 weeks) in the individual *Länder* are staggered over the period between the end of June and mid-September. The dates are fixed in a long-term agreement by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder*. Consequently, the actual beginning and end of the school year vary in the *Länder*.

(3) Includes the examination periods.

(4) Officially, the school year runs from 1 September of one year to 31 August of the following year (primary education) and from 1 August to 31 July (secondary education).

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(5) Officially, the school year runs from 1 September of one year to 31 August of the following year. Actual teaching, including time spent on assessment and examinations, takes place between 10 September and 30 June (with the exception of the final upper secondary examination which may also be held in the month of July). The effective dates of the start of classes are those fixed by the regional, national or local authorities.

(6) The dates of the beginning and end of the summer holidays are fixed by the Minister; they vary according to region, based on the principle of staggering school holidays. For example, for 1995:

	Primary education		Secondary education	
- North Region	8 July	20 August	18 July	27 August
- Central Region	23 July	3 September	15 July	3 September
- South Region	1 July	13 August	1 July	20 August

(7) At some intermediate and upper secondary vocational and technical schools (secondary level II), the beginning and end of the school year vary depending on the practical training programmes pupils must complete in industry. At least four, preferably consecutive, weeks of the main (summer) holidays must be left untouched by summer training courses.

(8) 9 June for the 12th year of schooling.

(9) According to the law on the *peruskoulu*, the school year starts on 1 August and ends on 31 July. There are, however, according to the same law, 190 school days in the school year. Teaching in schools begins in August. The municipalities (local authorities) decide the exact starting date (usually in the middle of August). Work ends on the last working day in week 22 (usually the last days of May or first days of June).

(10) The dates of the beginning and end of the school year are decided by the municipalities.

(11) In England and Wales, officially, the school year runs from 1 September of one year to 31 August of the following year. The teaching year normally runs from the first week in September to the third week in July, giving about six weeks' holidays in the summer. The precise dates of school opening are left to the discretion of the local education authorities or the school governing bodies; there is therefore variation between schools and regions, but little variation from one year to another.

(12) In Northern Ireland, the school year runs from the beginning of September to the end of June. The actual dates are decided by the Education and Library Boards.

(13) The starting date of the school year is a matter for regional education authorities to agree, according to local conditions, customs and climatic requirements.

(14) During the school year 1993/94, exemption from the 9-month school year was granted to 64 schools (*grunnskole* - nine years, for pupils from age 7 to 16). These schools, which are attended by almost 10% of children of compulsory school age, are all located in rural areas and their school year extends over either 8 or 8½ months.

TABLE III - STARTING DATES OF SCHOOL YEAR IN 1994/95 AND 1995/96 (PRIMARY AN SECONDARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	1994/95		1995/96	
BELGIUM				
French and Flemish Communities	1/9		1/9	
German-speaking Community	1/9		30/8	
DENMARK	8/8		14/8	
GERMANY				
Baden-Württemberg	22/8		11/9	
Bayern	13/9		12/9	
Berlin	25/8		14/8	
Brandenburg	22/8		14/8	
Bremen	5/9		21/8	
Hamburg	29/8		10/8	
Hessen	29/8		21/8	
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	29/8		10/8	
Niedersachsen	1/9		3/8	
Nordrhein/Westfalen	8/8		28/8	
Rheinland-Pfalz	11/8		21/8	
Saarland	15/8		17/8	
Sachsen	11/8		3/8	
Sachsen-Anhalt	11/8		3/8	
Schleswig-Holstein	29/8		10/8	
Thuringen	29/8		3/8	
GREECE	12/9		11/9	
SPAIN *	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
MEC	between 12/9 and 15/9	1st cycle: between 12/9 and 27/9 2nd cycle: between 26/9 and 30/9	between 11/9 and 13/9	1st cycle of ESO: between 18/9 and 26/9 the rest: between 25/9 and 28/9
CA - Pais Basco	not before 12/9	not before 3/10	not before 11/9	2/10
CA - Andalucia	15/9	28/9	15/9	28/9
CA - Valencia	12/9	29/9	14/9	14/9
CA - Catalena	15/9	26/9	15/9	25/9
CA - Canarias	15/9	3/10	14/9	2/10
CA - Navarra	12/9	23/9	11/9	11/9
CA - Galicia	15/9	29/9	15/9	29/9
FRANCE	8/9		5/9	
IRELAND	1/9		1/9	
ITALY	between 12/9 and 19/9 according to school zone		between 7/9 and 21/9 according to school zone	
LUXEMBOURG	15/9		15/9	
NETHERLANDS				
North Region	primary: 21/8	secondary: 28/8	primary: 12/8	secondary: 19/8
Central Region	primary: 4/9	secondary: 4/9	primary: 2/9	secondary: 2/9
South Region	primary: 14/8	secondary: 21/8	primary: 19/8	secondary: 26/8
AUSTRIA	Wien, Niederosterreich, Burgenland: September 5/7 All other *Lander*: September 12/14		Wien, Niederosterreich, Burgenland: September 4/6 All other *Lander*: September 11/13	
PORTUGAL	between 15/9 and 20/9		between 18/9 and 25/9	
FINLAND	between 15/8 and 19/8 (1)		between 14/8 and 18/8 (1)	
SWEDEN	17/8 (1)		21/8 (1)	
UNITED KINGDOM				
England and Wales	between 1/9 and 7/9		between 1/9 and 7/9	
Northern Ireland	1/9		30/8 or 1/9	
Scotland	between 18/8 and 25/8		between 18/8 and 25/8	
ICELAND	between 1/9 and 15/9		between 1/9 and 15/9	
NORWAY	22/8		16/8	

* MEC: under the responsibility of the Education Ministry.
CA: *Comunidad Autónoma* (Autonomous Community).
ESO: *Enseñanza Secundaria Obligatoria* (Compulsory Secondary Education).

(1) Starting dates are decided by the local authorities (municipalities). For Sweden, these are the dates of the schools in Stockholm.

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BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 1994/95
RANGE OF DATES

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

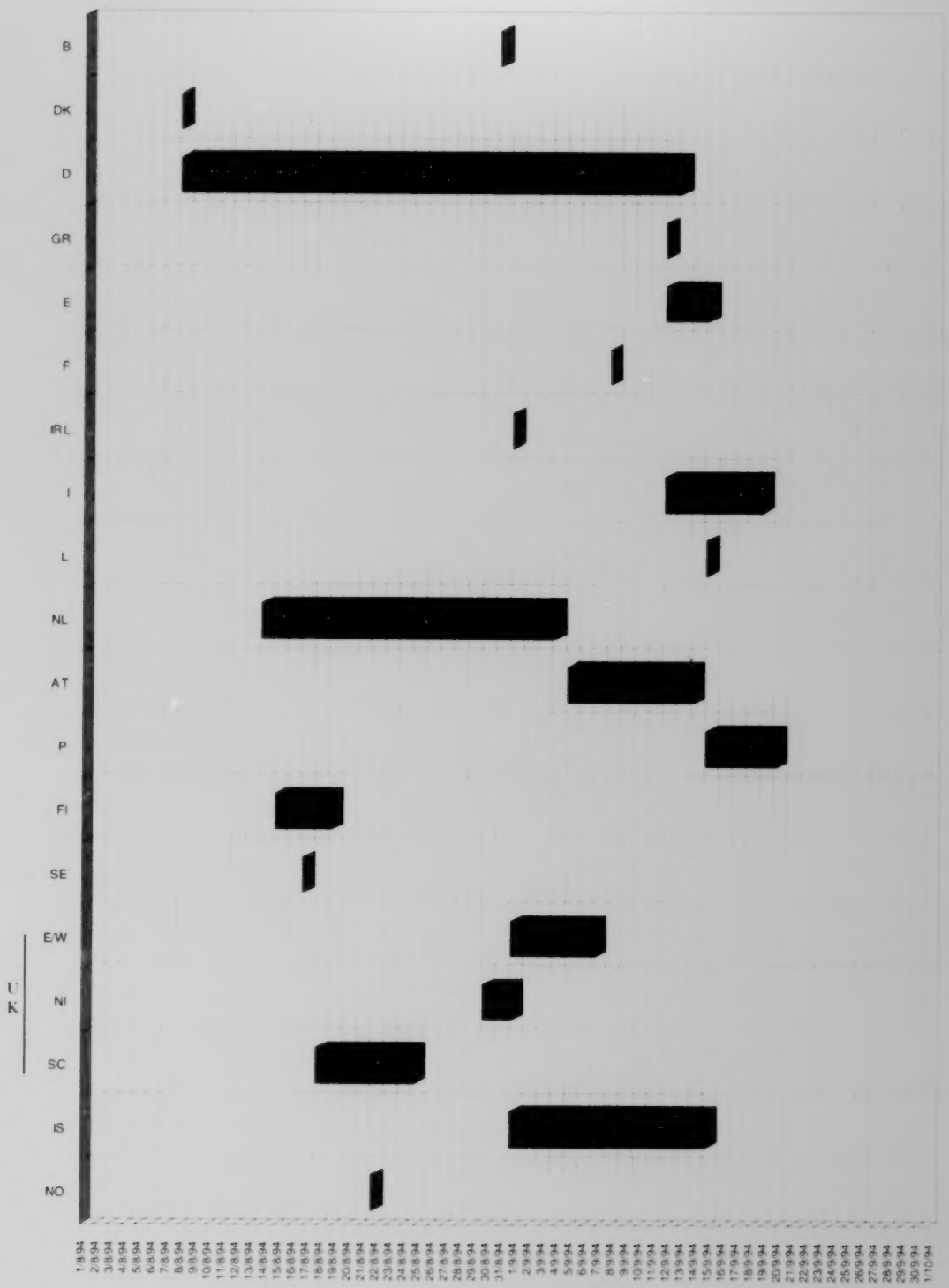

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TABLE IV - NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS IN THE YEAR (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	PRIMARY EDUCATION *	SECONDARY EDUCATION
BELGIUM	182	182
DENMARK	200	200
GERMANY (1)	188 (2) 208 (3)	188 (2) 208 (3)
GREECE	175	175 (4)
SPAIN	180 (5)	175
FRANCE	180 (6)	180 (6)
IRELAND	183	179 (5-day week system) 199 (6-day week system)**
ITALY	minimum 200	minimum 200
LUXEMBOURG	212	216
NETHERLANDS	200	200 (7) 195 (7)
AUSTRIA	180 (5-day week system) 214 (6-day week system)**	180 (5-day week system) 214 (6-day week system)**
PORTUGAL	175	175 (5-day week system) 210 (6-day week system)**
FINLAND	190	190 (8)
SWEDEN	minimum 178 maximum 190	minimum 178 maximum 190
UNITED KINGDOM ENGLAND AND WALES NORTHERN IRELAND SCOTLAND	 minimum 190 (9) minimum 190 (10) 190	 minimum 190 (9) minimum 190 (10) 190
ICELAND	maximum 160 (11)	maximum 155 to 160 (12)
NORWAY	190	190

* Primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure in Denmark (*folkeskole*), Finland (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), Sweden (*grundskola*), Iceland (*grunnskóli*) and Norway (*grunnskole*). In Portugal, first stage of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

** Nonetheless, the annual total number of teaching hours is the same for the 5-day week and the 6-day week.

(1) The number of school days in the year is the same in the long-term but may differ from one *Land* to another depending on the actual beginning and end of the summer holidays under a rotating system of holidays among the 16 *Länder*.

(2) Average for all *Länder* in the case of the 5-day week system.

(3) Average for all *Länder* in the case of the 6-day week system. The total of 208 days' teaching is arrived at on the basis of every other Saturday being free. The annual total number of hours of teaching is however the same under the 5-day and the 6-day week systems, as the teaching not given on Saturdays is distributed over the other days of the week.

(4) Not including time spent on examinations and school visits.

(5) 36 weeks of 5 days.

(6) This number may be reduced slightly, either because some public holidays fall on school days or where the organisation of the school week at primary level leaves every third Saturday free.

(7) The introduction of a revised structure, known as "basic education", in lower secondary education will result in an extension of the school year by 5 school days (from 195 to 200 days) in lower secondary education as from the school year 1993/94 .
The number of school days in the year in upper secondary education is 195 for the school years 1994/95 and 1995/96.

(8) In a general upper secondary school, the last year has 120 school days.

(9) According to the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981, all schools in England and Wales must meet for 380 half-day sessions a year. This is consistent with the 190 days a year on which teachers may be required to teach (School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document) and with the requirement (also in the 1981 Regulations) that every day on which a school meets be divided into two sessions separated by a break in the middle of the day, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Hours must be sufficient to teach the National Curriculum.

(10) 200 days, of which up to 10 may be taken as occasional holidays.

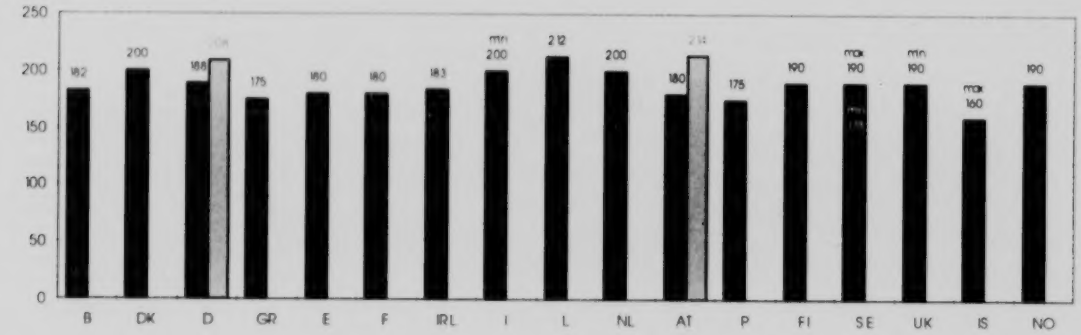
(11) Days of instruction are in actual fact fewer in most *grunnskólar* as examination days are included in this figure. School days are also fewer in those *grunnskólar* operating for only 8 or 8½ months.

(12) The number of actual days of instruction in upper secondary schools is usually limited to 130. Examinations cover approximately 20 days and pupils are required to attend a further 5 to 10 days for other activities, so that the number of actual school days in upper secondary schools can reach a maximum of 155-160 annually. According to new legislation and the school calendar, there will be 170 school days in 1995/96.

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS IN THE YEAR

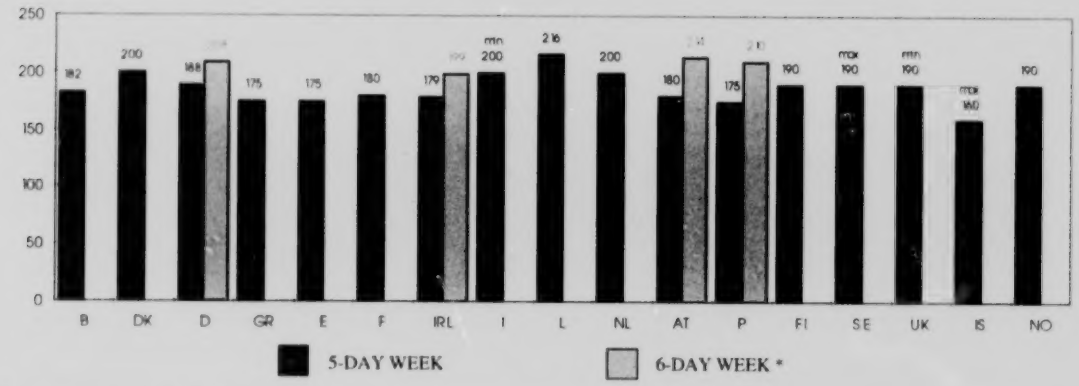
PRIMARY EDUCATION

Number of days



SECONDARY EDUCATION

Number of days



Germany: Average of all *Länder*.

* These data correspond to a 6-day week where lessons take place on every other Saturday, except in Austria where every Saturday is a school-day.

TABLE V - LENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL HOLIDAYS OVER THE SCHOOL YEAR (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	SUMMER	AUTUMN	CHRISTMAS	WINTER / CARNIVAL	SPRING / EASTER	3rd TERM	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / OCCASIONAL HOLIDAYS
BELGIUM							
FRENCH AND FLEMISH COMMUNITIES	Around 9 weeks (1/7 to 30/8).	1 week (starting on the Monday of the week of 1 November).	2 weeks (starting on the Monday of Christmas week).	1 week.	2 weeks. In the Flemish Community, when Easter falls in March, the holidays start on the Monday following Easter.		Around 5 public holidays + 1 optional day (sec. education) + 2 optional days (prim. education).
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	Around 8 weeks (beginning of July to end of August).	1 week (starting on the Monday of the week of 1 November).	2 weeks (starting on the Monday of Christmas week).	1 week (starting on the 7th Monday before Easter).	2 weeks (from the 1st Monday of April).		Around 5 public holidays + 2-3 optional days (primary and secondary education).
DENMARK	Around 7 weeks (mid-June to mid-August).	1 week.	2 weeks.	1 week in mid-February (Winter holidays). (1)	6 school days.		3 public holidays between Easter and the summer holidays.
GERMANY	6 weeks (staggered between end-June and mid-September).	1 to 12 days. (2)	8 to 17 days. (2)	1 to 7 days (not in all *Länder*) (Winter holidays). (2)	3 to 17 days. (2)	1 to 11 days (Whitsun). (2)	Up to 15 days of national, religious or local holidays, depending on the *Land*.
GREECE							
Primary education	Around 12 weeks (16/6 to 10/9).		2 weeks.		2 weeks.		Around 7 days of national or local religious holidays.
Secondary education	Around 9 weeks (1/7 to 31/8). (3)						
SPAIN							
Primary education	Around 11 weeks (end of June to the first fortnight of September).		Around 15 days.	3 days in February.	Around 8 days.		Around 7 public holidays per year.
Secondary education	Around 12 weeks (end of June to the 2nd fortnight of September).						
FRANCE	Around 9 weeks (staggered between end June/beginning July and first fortnight of September).	1 week.	2 weeks.	2 weeks (Winter holidays).	2 weeks (staggered between April and May) (Spring holidays).		From 3 to 5 public holidays between Easter and the summer holidays.
IRELAND							
Primary education	Around 9 weeks (end of June to 1 September).	Approximately 1 week (end of October). (4)	Around 10 days.		Around 10 days.		16 public and religious holidays. (5)
Secondary education	Around 13 weeks (end of May to 1 September).						
ITALY	Around 9 weeks (30 June to 1st September). (6)		Around 2 weeks.		Around 1 week.		5 public holidays.

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LUXEMBOURG	Around 9 weeks (from mid-July to mid-September).	1 week.	2 weeks.	1 week.	2 weeks.	1 week at Whitsun.	3 public holidays between Easter and summer holidays.
NETHERLANDS							
Primary education	6 weeks (staggered between beginning of July and beginning of September).	1 week in October.	2 weeks.	1 week in February or 1 week in March (Spring holidays).	Easter Monday.	1-2 week(s) end April/beginning May.	8 public holidays.
Secondary education	7 weeks (staggered between beginning of July and beginning of September).	1 week in October.	2 weeks.	1 week in February or 1 week in March (Spring holidays).	Easter Monday.	1-2 week(s) end April/beginning May.	8 public holidays.
AUSTRIA	9 weeks and in some cases 2 days (before the first or second Wednesday in September, at intermediate and higher secondary schools).		2 weeks (from 23 December to 6 January).	1 week (varying in the individual *Länder*, starting either on the first, second or third Monday in February).	9 days (from Monday before Easter until Tuesday after Easter).	2 days (Monday and Tuesday after Whitsun).	7 public and religious holidays. 1 holiday on the Patron Saint's Day in the various *Länder*. The schools and the school authorities can reserve up to 8 school days a year for various reasons.
PORTUGAL	Around 10 weeks.	1 day.	2 weeks.	2 days.	1 week and 2 days.		Around 8 public holidays.
FINLAND (7)	Around 10 weeks.	1 week decided by the municipalities.	10 days minimum.	1 week (Winter holiday), depending on the decision of the municipality.	Depending on the decision of the municipality.		Around 4 public holidays (plus 3 days in Easter time).
SWEDEN	Around 10 weeks. (8)		Around 3 weeks. (8)	1 week. (9)	1 week. (10)		Around 4 public holidays between Easter and the summer holiday.
UNITED KINGDOM							
England and Wales	6 weeks.	1 week (end of October).	2 weeks.	1 week.	2 weeks.	1 week in May.	(11)
Northern Ireland	8 weeks.	Varies.	2 weeks.	Varies.	2 weeks.	Varies.	
Scotland	6 weeks.	1 week (mid-October).	2 weeks.		2 weeks.		Around 8 days (local/bank holidays, long week-ends).
ICELAND	13 weeks (1 June – 31 August). (12)		2 weeks.		11 days.		Primary + lower secondary: 3-4 public holidays, 2 school holidays, 12 teachers' "preparation days". (12) Upper secondary: 3-4 public holidays, 2 school holidays.
NORWAY	Around 8 weeks.	1 week.	2 weeks.	1 week in Mid-February (Winter holidays).	8 days.		4 public holidays.

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(1) Depending on the schools.

(2) The length of the shorter holiday periods in each year is fixed by the individual *Länder* within the total number of 75 days of holiday in the school year. The figures in the table refer to the school year 1994/95.

(3) From 1/9 to 10/9: examination resits.

(4) Most schools take a mid-term break of one week's duration towards the end of October. This is usually arranged around one public holiday (last Monday in October) and one religious holiday (1st November).

(5) Includes public and religious holidays which occur during school holidays, e.g. first Monday in August (bank holiday) and 15th August (religious holiday). With effect from May 1994, Ireland has one extra bank holiday (1 May), bringing the total to 16.

(6) Including the examinations period, but excluding the *Maturità*.

(7) The length of the holidays depends on the date when the school year starts.

(8) Depending on the schools.

(9) Varies from mid-February to mid-March in different parts of the country.

(10) The week before or the week after Easter. Varies in different parts of the country.

(11) All public holidays fall during school holidays with the exception of the May Day holiday (first Monday in May).

(12) The summer holidays of children attending *grunnskólar* operating for 8 and 8½ months are longer. There are no winter holidays as such in Icelandic schools, but pupils have one holiday in December and one in February. Teachers are entitled to cancel classes for 12 "preparation days" during the school year in *grunnskólar*.

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL HOLIDAYS OVER THE YEAR IN PRIMARY EDUCATION (1994/95)

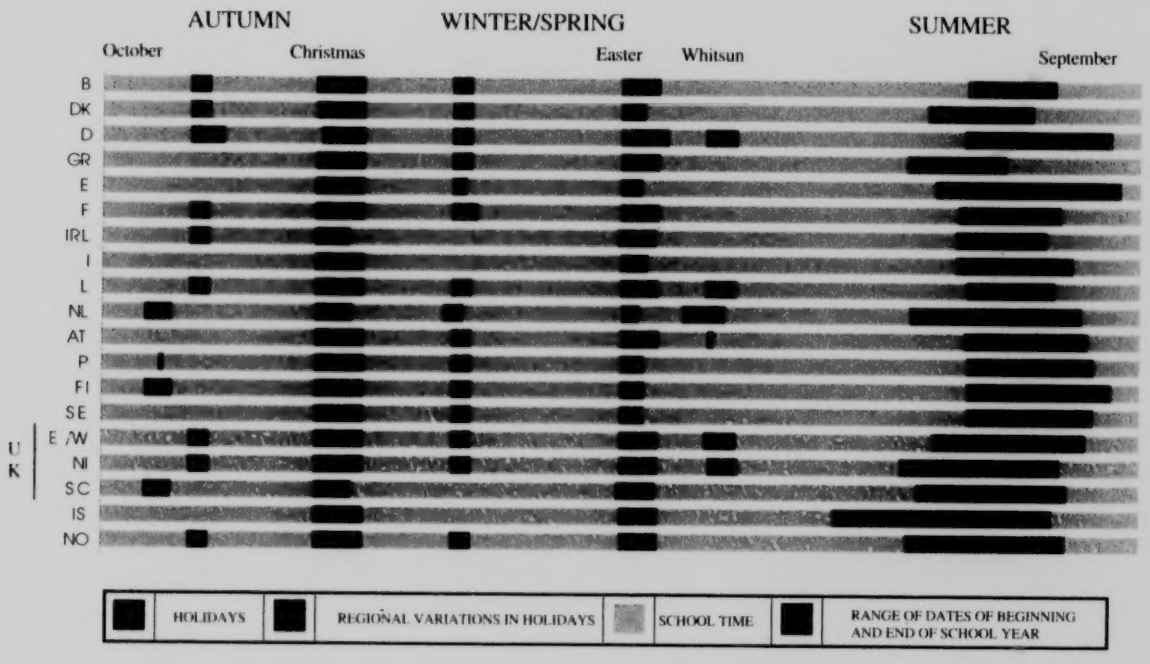

TABLE VI - LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL WEEK (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	PRIMARY EDUCATION *	SECONDARY EDUCATION
BELGIUM	9 half-days spread over 5 days	5 days
DENMARK	5 days	5 days
GERMANY (1)	5 days/6 days	5 days/6 days
GREECE	5 days	5 days
SPAIN	5 days	5 days
FRANCE	9 half-days spread over 5 days (2)	5 days/6 days (3)
IRELAND	5 days	5 days/6 days (4)
ITALY	5 days/6 days (5)	6 days (6)
LUXEMBOURG	6 days	6 days
NETHERLANDS	5 days	5 days
AUSTRIA	5 days (Monday to Friday; 5 half-days or 4 half-days and 1 full day)/6 half-days (7)	5 days (Monday to Friday)/6 days (Saturday half-day) (7)
PORTUGAL	5 days	5 days/6 days (8)
FINLAND	5 days	5 days
SWEDEN	5 days	5 days
UNITED KINGDOM		
ENGLAND AND WALES	5 days	5 days
NORTHERN IRELAND	5 days	5 days
SCOTLAND	5 days	5 days
ICELAND	5 days	5 days
NORWAY	5 days	5 days

* Primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure in Denmark (*folkeskole*), Finland (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), Sweden (*grundskola*), Iceland (*grunnskóli*) and Norway (*grunnskole*). In Portugal, first stage of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

(1) The weekly teaching time determined by the Ministries of Education of the *Länder* for the individual types of school may be distributed over 5 or 6 days at the request of the school. Schools operate on the basis of either a regular 5-day week, or a 6-day week but with no classes on one or two Saturdays in the month. The tendency to introduce a regular 5-day week is increasing in all *Länder*.

(2) This is the most common situation. However, since 1991 an increasing number of schools have been introducing the 4-day week. Nearly 20% of pupils are involved in this arrangement in 1994/95.

(3) Or 9 to 10 half-days.

(4) At the discretion of the Boards of Management, secondary schools may operate a 5-day or 6-day week, but the Board's decision when submitting the timetable to the Departement of Education cannot be changed during the course of the year.

(5) Following the reorganisation of primary education, in force since the 1990/91 school year, schools may choose, in consultation with parents, to provide education on 5 or 6 days a week, on the basis of one of the following formulae: 6-day timetable, mornings only; 6-day timetable also including one or two afternoons; 5-day timetable including several afternoons.

The 6-morning formula is tending to disappear, partly because of the increasing desire of parents to leave their children at school in the afternoon and partly because of the increase in the number of subjects taught in the primary school.

(6) In lower secondary education, the full-time formula is gradually being replaced by the extended timetable, the main feature of which is that it is the same teachers who teach the curricular and extra-curricular subjects. The teachers responsible for the curricular subjects also organise the extra-curricular courses, either with teachers of other classes or with those in different subject areas.
At upper secondary level, there are always classes 6 days a week.

(7) Teachers and parents must be consulted when a 5-day week (Monday to Friday) or a 6-day week (Monday to Saturday midday) is fixed.

(8) Where there is a shortage of accommodation.

TABLE VII - NUMBER OF LESSONS A WEEK AND DURATION OF ONE LESSON

1. PRIMARY EDUCATION *

MEMBER STATE	NUMBER OF LESSONS A WEEK	DURATION OF A LESSON
BELGIUM	28	50 minutes (1)
DENMARK	minimum from 20 to 28 (2)	45 minutes
GERMANY	17 to 27 (3)	45 minutes
GREECE	23 to 30	40 to 50 minutes
SPAIN	25	at the teacher's discretion (4)
FRANCE	26	at the teacher's discretion (5)
IRELAND	22 (6)	flexible
ITALY	27 to 30 (7)	at the teacher's discretion
LUXEMBOURG	30	18 lessons of 55 minutes 12 lessons of 50 minutes
NETHERLANDS	minimum 22 (8) minimum 25 (9)	60 minutes (in general)
AUSTRIA	20/21 to 25/26 (10)	50 minutes
PORTUGAL	25 (11)	at the teacher's discretion
FINLAND	19/21 to 30 (12)	60 minutes (12)
SWEDEN	20 to 34 (13)	at the teacher's discretion (40 minutes in general)
UNITED KINGDOM ENGLAND AND WALES NORTHERN IRELAND SCOTLAND	 (14) (16) (17)	 (15) (16) (17)
ICELAND	25 to 32 (18)	40 minutes
NORWAY	20 to 28 (19)	45 minutes

* Primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure in Denmark (*folkeskole*), Finland (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), Sweden (*grundskola*), Iceland (*grunnskoli*) and Norway (*grunnskole*). In Portugal, first stage of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

(1) Belgium - French Community: during the first two years of primary education, the length of a lesson should rarely exceed half a period, or 25 minutes.
Belgium - Flemish Community: during the first four years of primary education, the 50-minute lesson is divided into 2 periods of 25 minutes.

(2) This applies to the whole period of compulsory education (*folkeskole*), i.e. increasing progressively from a minimum of 20 lessons a week in the 1st year to a minimum of 28 lessons a week in the 9th year. Normally, the actual number of lessons is greater.

(3) Increasing from the 1st to the 4th year. In two *Länder* (Berlin and Brandenburg), primary education comprises 6 years with from 17 to 30 lessons a week, increasing from the 1st year to the 6th year.

(4) There are generally 25 lessons of 60 minutes, including ½ hour break in the middle of the morning.

(5) The weekly timetable can be modified, but the total annual number of hours, which must be adhered to, is calculated on the basis of 26 hours a week, including on average a ½ hour break each day.

(6) In addition to religious instruction (5 lessons of half-an-hour), National Schools are required to provide daily 4 hours and 10 minutes of secular instruction (3 hours and 10 minutes in the case of infants).

(7) Pupils may spend up to 40 hours a week at school. The additional hours comprise, in addition to meal times, educational activities to enrich and extend knowledge of the subjects studied.
At the teacher's discretion, pupils may have a break of about ½ hour each day.

(8) During the first four years of primary education, or a minimum of 880 hours a year.

(9) During the last four years of primary education, or a minimum of 1 000 hours a year.

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(10) The number of lessons a week gradually increases from the 1st to the 4th year. Pupils may attend up to 4 lessons a week on a voluntary basis for additional elective subjects and/or optional exercises. Moreover, they may attend one remedial period.

(11) At the teacher's discretion, pupils may have a break of about ½ hour each day.

(12) Applies to the whole period of compulsory education (*peruskoulu/grundskola*), i.e. increasing progressively from 19 to 21 hours a week in the 1st and 2nd years, and at the most 5 lessons a day, to 23 to 25 hours a week in the 3rd and 4th years, 24 to 26 a week in the 5th and 6th years and on average 30 hours a week in the 7th to 9th years. In the 3rd to 6th years, there can be a maximum of 6 lessons a day and in the 7th to 9th/10th years 7 lessons a day. The length of a lesson is 60 minutes, of which a minimum of 45 minutes is used for teaching and at least 10 minutes are reserved for a break.

(13) This applies to the whole period of compulsory education, i.e. increasing progressively from 20 hours/week at age 7 to 24 hours/week at age 8; 30 hours/week at age 9; and34 hours/week at ages 10 to 12. The post-reform system sets a minimum requirement of teaching time of 6 665 units of 60 minutes over the nine years during compulsory education (*grundskola*). The school board is free to distribute these units over the nine years.

(14) The suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time in England and Wales is 21 hours for 5 to 7-year-olds and 23.5 for 8 to 11-year-olds. These "suggested" hours include only those hours in which pupils are being formally taught. They exclude breaks, the daily act of collective worship, and registration. Most primary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. In 1994, the average at Key Stage 1 (5 to 7-year-olds) was 22.1 hours. At Key Stage 2 (7 to 11-year-olds) the average was 23.5 hours.

(15) The day is rarely divided in this formal way. There must be a break in the middle of the day, and all schools have mid-morning breaks (about 15 minutes). Further division of the day is at the discretion of the headteacher and class teacher, according to the subjects of study.

(16) At primary level, pupils aged under 8 years of age must receive 3 hours' education plus 30 minutes' religious instruction daily. Those aged 8 to 11 years must receive 4 hours 30 minutes' education plus 30 minutes' religious instruction.

(17) Within guidelines, each teacher determines the number and duration of lessons, in consultation with the headteacher. The integrated day in primary school results in a much less structured timetable than that of secondary.

(18)

Number of lessons in years 1 to 3:	25
Number of lessons in year 4:	26
Number of lessons in year 5:	28
Number of lessons in year 6:	30
Number of lessons in year 7:	32

(19) Some schools might have less than 20 lessons a week in the first year.

2. LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

MEMBER STATE	NUMBER OF LESSONS A WEEK	DURATION OF LESSON
BELGIUM		
French Community	minimum 28, maximum 32/34/36 (1)	50 minutes
German-speaking Community	minimum 32, maximum 34	50 minutes
Flemish Community	minimum 32, maximum 32/36 (1)	50 minutes
DENMARK	minimum from 26 to 28 (2)	45 minutes (2)
GERMANY	years 5 and 6: in general 28 years 7 to 10: in general 30	45 minutes
GREECE	33 to 35	45 minutes
SPAIN	30	50 to 55 minutes
FRANCE	25 to 30 (3)	55 minutes
IRELAND	40 to 45	35 to 40 minutes (4)
ITALY	30 (5)	60 minutes
LUXEMBOURG	30	50 minutes
NETHERLANDS	32	50 minutes
AUSTRIA	31 to 34 (6)	50 minutes
PORTUGAL *	31	50 minutes
FINLAND	on average 30 (7)	60 minutes (7)
SWEDEN	33 to 34 (8)	at the teacher's discretion (40 minutes in general)
UNITED KINGDOM		
England and Wales**	approximately 40 (9)	35 to 40 minutes
Northern Ireland **	approximately 40 (9)	35 to 40 minutes
Scotland	35 to 40 (10)	40 to 60 minutes
ICELAND	34	40 minutes
NORWAY	30	45 minutes

* 2nd and 3rd stages of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

** Age range 11-14.

(1) Belgium - French Community:
- In general education, maximum 32 periods (plus 2 possible remedial periods).
- In technical, artistic and vocational education, maximum from 32 to 34 periods (plus 2 possible remedial periods) up to 36 periods, depending on the options taken.

Belgium - Flemish Community:
- In general education, maximum 32 periods.
- In technical, artistic and vocational education, maximum 36 periods.

(2) See Table VII, Primary Education.

(3) Depending on the options taken.

(4) Periods of instruction in secondary schools vary between 35 minutes and 55 minutes, most schools favouring a combination of 35/40 minutes and 45 minutes.

(5) Under the extended timetable, pupils may spend up to 36/40 hours a week at school. The additional hours include, in addition to lunchtime, educational activities to enrich and extend knowledge of the subjects studied.

(6) The number of lessons a week gradually increases from the 5th to the 8th year. Pupils may attend up to 7 lessons a week on a voluntary basis for additional elective subjects and/or optional exercises. Additionally, they may attend four remedial periods a week at general secondary school. Of the total number of lessons a week from the 5th to the 8th years, 16 lessons (general secondary school) and 8 lessons (academic secondary school) may be used independently for specific contents and projects and spread over the entire year at the discretion of individual schools.

(7) For the 7th to 9th/10th years of compulsory education (*peruskoulu, grundskola);* see also Table VII, Primary Education.

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(8) The post-reform system sets a minimum requirement of teaching time of 6 665 units of 60 minutes over the nine years of compulsory education (*grundskola*). The school board is free to distribute these units over the nine years.

(9) There are no legal requirements relating to the number of lessons or their duration. The detail of the daily timetable is a matter for the headteacher of each school. The figures given are general and vary from school to school.

In England and Wales, the suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time is 24 hours for 12-16-year-olds. These "suggested" hours include only those hours in which pupils are being formally taught. They exclude breaks, the daily act of collective worship, and registration. Many secondary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. In 1994, the average at Key Stage 3 (11 to 14-year-olds) was 24.4 hours.

In Northern Ireland, the statutory minimum is 22.5 hours of lesson time a week (exclusive of religious instruction).

(10) This is approximate. Heads of subject departments in schools will negotiate with the headteacher the number and duration of lessons for each subject.

3. UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

MEMBER STATE	NUMBER OF LESSONS A WEEK	DURATION OF LESSON
BELGIUM		
FRENCH COMMUNITY	General education: minimum 28, maximum 32 Artistic/technical/vocational education: minimum 28, maximum 32/34/36 (1)	50 minutes
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	General education: minimum 32, maximum 36 Technical education: minimum 32, maximum 36 Vocational education: minimum 34, maximum 36	50 minutes
FLEMISH COMMUNITY	minimum 32, maximum 32/36 (1)	50 minutes
DENMARK	30 to 32	45 minutes
GERMANY	General education: in general 30 Technical/vocational education: minimum 30, maximum 36 (2)	45 minutes
GREECE	General *Lykeia*: 30 Comprehensive *Lykeia*: 34 Technical/vocational *Lykeia*: 34 Musical *Lykeia*: 41	45 minutes
SPAIN	30	50 - 55 minutes
FRANCE	29½ to 31½ (3)	55 minutes
IRELAND	40 to 45	35 - 45 minutes
ITALY	Classical *Liceo*: minimum 27, maximum 29 Scientific *Liceo*: minimum 25, maximum 30 Technical institute: minimum 31, maximum 38 Vocational institute: minimum 31, maximum 40 (4)	60 minutes
LUXEMBOURG	General secondary: minimum 28, maximum 31 Technical secondary: minimum 32, maximum 36	50 minutes
NETHERLANDS	minimum 28, maximum 32	50 minutes
AUSTRIA	32 to 40 (5)	50 minutes
PORTUGAL	*CSPOPE* (6): minimum 27, maximum 37 (10th and 11th years) minimum 23, maximum 34 (12th year) *CT* (7): minimum 29, maximum 32 (10th and 11th years) minimum 28, maximum 33 (12th year)	50 minutes
FINLAND	(8)	(8)
SWEDEN	Academically oriented programmes: approximately 20 (9) Vocationally oriented programmes: approximately 22 (10)	60 minutes
UNITED KINGDOM		
ENGLAND AND WALES *	approximately 40 (*Key Stage 4* only) (11)	+ 35 - 40 minutes
NORTHERN IRELAND *	approximately 40 (*Key Stage 4* only) (11)	+ 35 - 40 minutes
SCOTLAND	35 to 40 (12)	40 minutes (12)
ICELAND	General education: from 30 to 36 (13) Vocational education: from 36 to 46	40 minutes (in general)
NORWAY	30 (14) - 35	45 minutes

* Age range 14-18.

(1) Belgium - French Community:
- In general education, maximum 32 periods (plus 2 possible remedial periods).
- In technical, artistic and vocational education, the maximum number of periods is from 32 to 34 periods (plus 2 possible remedial periods) to 36 periods according to the options taken.

Belgium- Flemish Community:
- In general education and in the last year of the third stage of artistic education, maximum 32 periods.
- In technical, artistic and vocational education, maximum 36 periods.

(2) Under the "dual system" (*Berufsschule* and on-the-job training), in general 12 to 13 periods of part-time education a week.

(3) In the last two years, depending on the options chosen by the pupil, the maximum can go up to 35.

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(4) In view of the high number of hours of courses in technical and vocational establishments, the school councils often ask to have the duration of lessons reduced to 55 or even 50 minutes. Permission is given by the *Provveditore agli studi* (provincial education authority) after consideration of the reasons given. This is most often in order to make school hours compatible with public transport timetables, since upper secondary schools are found only in relatively large towns and they accept pupils coming from a wide geographical area.

(5) The number of lessons in the week gradually increases from the 9th to the 13th year. Pupils may attend up to 4 lessons a week on a voluntary basis for additional elective subjects and/or optional exercices. Under the "dual" system of education (part-time vocational school and on-the-job training, in years 10 - 12), the number of weekly lessons (part-time) is 8 to 9 (held on one day of the week).

(6) Courses predominantly leading to further studies.

(7) Technological courses.

(8) In the upper secondary school, the subject teaching and student counselling in class are organised in courses, each course consisting of 38 lessons of 45 minutes each on average. Voluntary courses may be longer or shorter. Additionally, there may be remedial teaching. The minimum number of courses in the upper secondary school is 75.

(9) The academically oriented programmes have a minimum requirement of teaching time of 2 180 units, consisting of 60 minutes, over the three years in upper secondary education (*gymnasieskola*). The local authorities are free to distribute these units over the three years.

(10) The vocationally oriented programmes have a minimum requirement of teaching time of 2 400 units, consisting of 60 minutes, over the three years in upper secondary education (*gymnasieskola*). The local authorities are free to distribute these units over the three years.

(11) There are no legal requirements relating to the number of lessons or their duration. The detail of the daily timetable is a matter for the headteacher of each school. The figures given in the table apply to Key Stage 4 (14-16 years). These figures are general and vary from school to school.

In England and Wales, the suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time is 24 hours for 12 to 16-year-olds. These "suggested" hours include only those hours in which pupils are being formally taught. They exclude breaks, the daily act of collective worship, and registration. Many secondary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. At Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 year-olds) the average is 24.5 hours.

At post compulsory level (16-18 years) students may continue their education in school or in further education institutions. The number of lessons a week will be determined by the courses of study undertaken by individual students. A GCE 'A' level normally involves 240-300 hours of lessons ("contact time") over 2 school years. Based on a 30-week year, this equates to 4-5 hours a week. Any private study is in addition to these contact hours. Students normally take 3 or 4 'A' levels. However, they may take other courses such as General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or a combination of these courses. Students who continue their post-compulsory education in schools are required to remain in school during school hours. Students who study in further education institutions are only required to attend for their actual lessons.

In Northern Ireland, the statutory minimum is 22.5 hours of lesson time a week during compulsory secondary education (11-16 years).

(12) Fixed by each education authority; each headteacher is at liberty to determine the number and the duration of lessons within the individual school, in consultation with the teaching staff.

(13) There are several exceptions from those numbers of lessons in the week.

(14) General and business studies - 30 hours a week.

TABLE VIII - ANNUAL CLASS HOURS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION *

1. AT START OF SCHOOLING (AROUND AGE 6)

MEMBER STATE	Weekly load	Number of days/week	Daily load	Number of days/year	Annual load
BELGIUM	28 x 50' = min. 1 400'	5	280'	182	50 960' = min. 849 hrs 20'
DENMARK (1)	20 x 45' = 900'	5	180'	200	36 000' = 600 hrs
GERMANY	20 x 45' = 900' (2)	5/6	180'/163'	188/208	33 840' = 564 hrs (2)
GREECE	min. 23 x 45' = 1 035' max. 25 x 45' = 1 125'	5	min. 4 x 45' = 180' max. 5 x 45' = 225'	175	min. 36 300' = 605 hrs max. 39 360' = 656 hrs (3)
SPAIN	(25 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30')** = 1 350'	5	270'	180	48 600' = 810 hrs
FRANCE	(26 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30')** = 1 410'	5	282'	180	50 760' = 846 hrs
IRELAND	18 hrs 20' = 1 100'	5	220'	183	40 260' = 671 hrs
ITALY	(27 hrs x 60') - (6 days x 30')** = 1 440'	6 (4)	240'	min. 200	48 000' = 800 hrs
LUXEMBOURG	(18 x 55') + (12 x 50') = 1 590'	6	265'	212	56 180' = 936 hrs 20'
NETHERLANDS	22 hrs = 1 320'	5	264'	200	52 800' = 880 hrs
AUSTRIA	21 x 50' = 1 050'	5/6	210'/175'	180/214	37 800' = 630 hrs
PORTUGAL	(25 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30')** = 1 350'	5	270'	175	47 250' = 787 hrs
FINLAND (5)	min. 19 x 45' = 855' max. 21 x 45' = 945'	5	min. 171' max. 189'	190	min. 32 490' = 541 hrs 30' max. 35 910' = 598 hrs 30'
SWEDEN	min. 20 x 40' = 800'	5	min. 160'	min. 178 (6) e.g. 185 (7)	min. 28 480' = 474 hrs 40' (6) e.g. 29 600' = 493 hrs 20' (7)
UNITED KINGDOM					
ENGLAND AND WALES (8)	22.1 hrs = 1 326'	5	265.2'	190	50 388' = 840 hrs
NOTHERN IRELAND	17 hrs 30' = 1 050'	5	210'	190	39 900' = 665 hrs
SCOTLAND	22 hrs 30' = 1 350'	5	270'	190	51 300' = 855 hrs
ICELAND	25 x 40' = 16 hrs 40' = 1 000'	5	200'	160	32 000' = 533 hrs 20'
NORWAY (9)	20 x 45' = 900'	5	180'	190	33 300' = 555 hrs

* Primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure in Denmark (*folkeskole*), Finland (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), Sweden (*grundskola*), Iceland (*grunnskóli*) and Norway (*grunnskole*). In Portugal, first stage of "basic education" (*ensino básico*).

** 1/2 hour break each day has been subtracted.

(1) Data apply to pre-school classes in accordance with the new Act on the *folkeskole* which came into effect in August 1994. These figures do not however take into account other classes provided for pupils (e.g. leisure-time courses and activities provided by the schools themselves, by leisure centres or by "municipal schools for young people").

(2) Average number of lessons of 45 minutes in the first year in all *Länder* (see also notes (1), (2) and (3) on page 16). The annual course load has been calculated in full hours (i.e. of 60 minutes).

(3) Either a maximum load of 656 hours (35 weeks x 25 lessons x 45 minutes) or a minimum load of 605 hours (35 weeks x 23 lessons x 45 minutes).

(4) Even though primary school pupils generally have a 5-day week, annual class hours are officially calculated on the basis of the 6-day week.

(5) Figures relate to pupils in the 1st and 2nd years of compulsory education (*peruskoulu, grundskola*), i.e. children of ages 7 and 8.

(6) The post-reform system sets a minimum requirement of teaching time of 6 665 units of 60 minutes, over the nine years in the compulsory school (*grundskola*). The school board is free to distribute these units over the nine years.

(7) This example is from the schools in Stockholm.

(8) The suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time is 21 hours for 5 to 7-year-olds. These "suggested" hours include only those hours in which pupils are being formally taught. They exclude the daily act of collective worship and registration. Many primary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. In 1993, the average at Key Stage 1 (5 to 7-year-olds) was 22.1 hours.

(9) Figures relate to pupils in the 1st year of compulsory education (*grunnskole*), i.e. children of age 7. The number of school days has been increased from 185 to 190, but the annual load has been kept unchanged.

2. DURING THE COURSE OF SCHOOLING (AROUND AGE 9)

MEMBER STATE	Weekly load	Number of days/week	Daily load	Number of days / year	Annual load
BELGIUM	min. 28 x 50' = min. 1 400'	5	280'	182	min. 50 960' = min. 849 hrs 20'
DENMARK (1)	22 x 45' = 990'	5	198'	200	39 600' = 660 hrs
GERMANY	25 x 45' = 1 125' (2)	5/6	225'/203'	188/208	42 300' = 705 hrs (2)
GREECE	min. 28 x 45' = 1 260' max. 30 x 45' = 1 350'	5	min. 225' max. 270'	175	min. 44.160' = 736 hrs max. 47 280' = 788 hrs (3)
SPAIN	(25 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30') = 1 350'*	5	270'	180	48 600' = 810 hrs
FRANCE	(26 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30') = 1 410'*	5	282'	180	50 760' = 846 hrs
IRELAND	23 hrs 20' = 1 400'	5	280'	183	51 240' = 854 hrs
ITALY	(27 hrs x 60') - (6 days x 30') = 1 440'* (30 hrs x 60') - (6 days x 30') = 1 620'* (4)	6 (4)	240'/270'	min. 200	48 000'/54 000' = 800 hrs/900 hrs (4)
LUXEMBOURG	(18 x 55' + 12 x 50') = 1 590'	6	265'	212	56 180' = 936 hrs 20'
NETHERLANDS	25 hrs = 1 500'	5	300'	200	60 000' = 1000 hrs
AUSTRIA	25 x 50' = 1 250'	5/6	250'/208'	180/214	45 000' = 750 hrs
PORTUGAL	(25 hrs x 60') - (5 days x 30') = 1 350' *	5	270'	175	47 250' = 787 hrs
FINLAND	min. 23 x 45' = 1 035' max. 25 x 45' = 1 125'	5	min. 207' max. 225'	190	min. 39 330' = 655 hrs 30' max. 42 750' = 712 hrs 30'
SWEDEN	min. 30 x 40' = 1 200'	5	min. 240'	min. 178 (5) e.g. 185 (6)	min. 42 720' = 712 hrs e.g. 44 400' = 740 hrs
UNITED KINGDOM					
ENGLAND AND WALES (7)	23 hrs 30' = 1 410'	5	282'	190	53 580' = 893 hrs
NORTHERN IRELAND	25 hrs = 1 500'	5	300'	190	57 000' = 950 hrs
SCOTLAND	25 hrs = 1 500'	5	300'	190	57 000' = 950 hrs
ICELAND	26 x 40' = 17 hrs 20' = 1 040'	5	208'	160	33 280' = 554 hrs 40'
NORWAY (8)	22 x 45' = 990'	5	198'	190	36 630' = 610 hrs 30'

* ½ hour each day. hour break each day has been subtracted.

(1) Data apply to 3rd year classes in accordance with the new Act on the *folkeskole* which came into effect in August 1994. These figures do not however take into account other classes provided for pupils (e.g. leisure-time courses and activities provided by the schools themselves, by leisure centres or by "municipal schools for young people").

(2) Average number of lessons of 45 minutes in the 4th year in all *Länder* (see also notes (1), (2) and (3) on page 16). The annual course load has been calculated in full hours (i.e. of 60 minutes).

(3) The minimum time is 28 periods x 35 weeks = 980 periods of 45 minutes.
The maximum time is 30 periods x 35 weeks = 1050 periods of 45 minutes.

(4) The weekly load increases to 30 hours (1200 hours a year) where pupils take a foreign language course.
Even though primary school pupils generally have a 5-day week, annual class hours are officially calculated on the basis of the 6-day week.

(5) The post-reform system sets a minimum requirement of teaching time of 6 665 units of 60 minutes, over the nine years in the compulsory school (*grundskola*). The school board is free to distribute these units over the nine years.

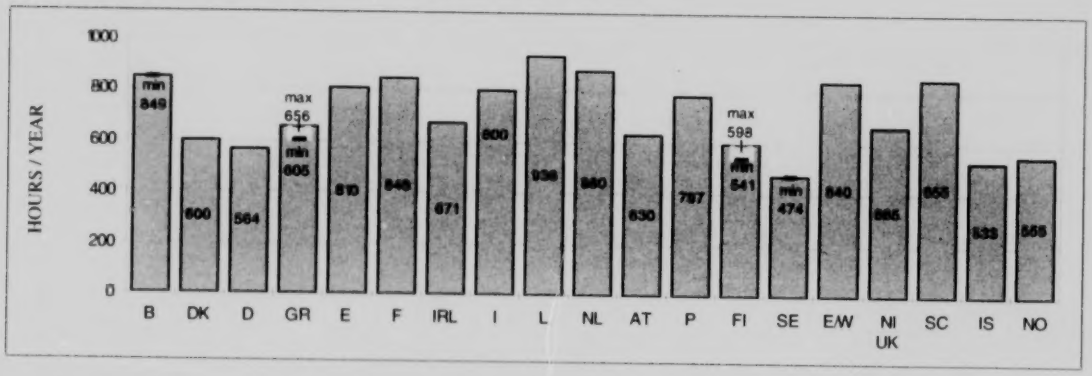
(6) The example is from the schools in Stockholm.

(7) The suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time is 23.5 for 8 to 11-year-olds. These recommended hours include only those hours in which pupils are being formally taught. They exclude the daily act of collective worship and registration. Many primary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. However, in 1994, the average number of hours at Key Stage 2 (7 to 11-year-olds) was 23.5 hours.

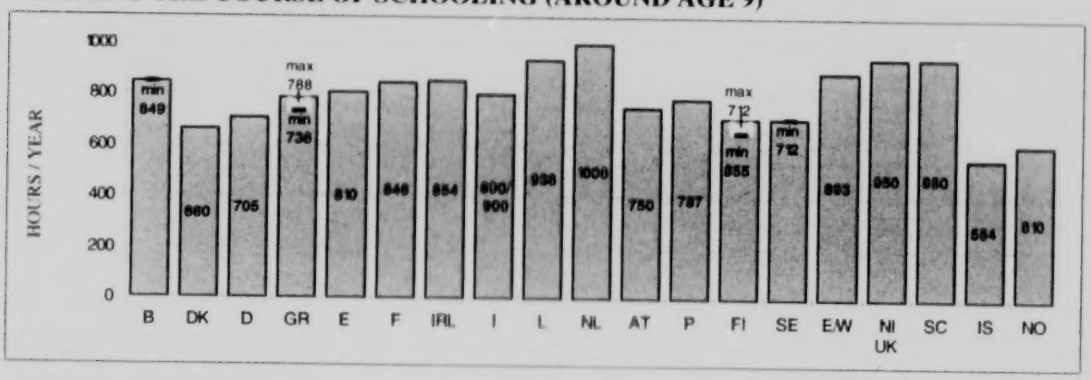
(8) The number of school days has been increased from 185 to 190, but the annual load has been kept unchanged.

ANNUAL CLASS HOURS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

AT START OF SCHOOLING (AROUND AGE 6)



DURING THE COURSE OF SCHOOLING (AROUND AGE 9)



Germany: Average.
Spain, France, Italy and Portugal: These has been no change in school time in the last two years. The change in the annual number of class hours as compared with the 1993 edition represents a correction of the figures.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The annual course load is calculated from the number of hours per week, or the number of periods, multiplied by length of a period, to obtain the weekly load. This total is then divided by the number of days per week, then multiplied by the number of school days in the year. All types of break (recreational or other) have been excluded from the calculation.

TABLE IX - LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL DAY (PRIMARY EDUCATION)

This table aims to give a general idea of the organisation of the school day and the distribution of teaching time; the information given is for guidance only, since the situation may vary from one school to another.

MEMBER STATE	
BELGIUM	
FRENCH COMMUNITY	8.30/9 a.m. - 12.00 noon 1.30 p.m. - 3.15 p.m./3.45 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) 8.30/9.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.)
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	8.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon 1.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) (1) 8.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.) (1)
FLEMISH COMMUNITY (2)	8.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon 1.30 p.m. - 4 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) 8.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.)
DENMARK (3)	According to class level; e.g. 8 a.m./9 a.m. - 2 p.m./3 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.) (with a short lunch break of around 20 minutes) in the upper years; 8 a.m./9 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.) in the first years.
GERMANY (4)	7.30 a.m./8.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m./12.30 p.m. Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri. or Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri., Sat.
GREECE (5)	1) 8.15 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.) for all schools, regardless of type. 2) 2 p.m. - 7 p.m.
SPAIN	9/10 a.m. - 12.00 noon/1 p.m. 2.30/3.30 p.m. - 4/5 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
FRANCE	8.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. 1.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) and 8.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. (Sat.)
IRELAND (6)	9 a.m. - 11.45 a.m. 12.30 a.m. - 2.40 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
ITALY	1) 8.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. for 6 days; or 2) 8.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. for 5 days, with lunch at school compulsory (condition to be observed if this timetable is chosen); or 3) 8.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. for 5/6 days, with courses in the afternoon on 1/2/3 day(s).
LUXEMBOURG	8 a.m. - 11.45 a.m. 2 p.m. - 3.45 p.m. (Mon., Wed., Fri.) and 8 a.m. - 11.45 a.m. (Tues., Thur., Sat.)
NETHERLANDS (7)	In the first four years: 8.45 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. 1.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) and 8.45 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. (Wed.) In the last four years : 8.45 a.m. - 12.00 noon. 1.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) and 8.45 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.) (Example of a primary school in Zoetermeer)
AUSTRIA (8)	7 a.m./ 8 a.m. - 11.30 a.m./11.45 a.m. or up to 12.30 p.m./ 12.45 p.m.
PORTUGAL (9)	1) Simple system (10): 9 a.m. - 12.00 noon. 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.); or 2) Shift system (11): 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.), or 3) Shift system (11): 1.15 p.m. - 6.15 p.m.(Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
FINLAND	1-6 years: 8 a.m./9 a.m. - 1 p.m./2 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.) (with a short lunch break, of at least 30 minutes) 7-9 years: 8 a.m. - varying - 1 p.m./4 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.) (with a short lunch break, of at least 30 minutes)
SWEDEN (12)	8 a.m. - 1.30 p.m./3.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.). The lunch break is 40-60 minutes between 10.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
UNITED KINGDOM	
ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND (13)	9 a.m. - 12.00 noon 1 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
SCOTLAND (14)	9 a.m. - 12.15 p.m. 1.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.
ICELAND (15)	a) Shift system: 8 a.m./ 9 a.m. - 12.00 noon and 1 p.m. - 4 p.m./ 5 p.m. b) Simple system: 9 a.m. - 2.30 p.m. (lunch break between noon and 1 p.m).
NORWAY (16)	According to the class level; e.g. 8 a.m./9 a.m. - 2 p.m./3 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)(with a short lunch break of around 20-30 minutes) In the first years: 8 a.m./9 a.m. - 12.00 noon

(1) May vary by about 10 minutes depending on school transport arrangements.

(2) The governing body fixes the times when the school day starts and finishes. In order not to disrupt daily family life, the beginning and end of the school day should be the same every day of the week.

(3) Schools are free to determine their timetables as long as they fall within the period 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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(4) Traditionally, the standard system is one of half-day schooling. All-day schools (*Ganztagsschulen*) are quite rare, and the *Länder* are not planning a general extension of this type of school.

(5) Many buildings accommodate more than one school. In such cases, therefore, pupils attend lessons either in the morning or in the afternoon, or in the morning one week and in the afternoon the following week.

(6) For 4 to 6-year-olds ("junior infants") attending primary school, the school day is one hour less.

(7) There are at the most 5½ hours of teaching per day. The opening hours in primary education are from 8.30 a.m. to 3 or 3.30 p.m., with a lunch break lasting an average of an hour to an hour and a half. In general, Wednesday afternoon is free.

(8) The situation may vary slightly from one school to the other. Traditionally, the standard system is one of half-day schooling, and different variations of half-day (mornings) and afternoon schooling as part of a 5- or 6-day school week. All-day schools are rarely found in the Austrian system of education.

(9) The timetable for the first stage of "basic education" depends on the accommodation available. Classes are held either all day (single system) or mornings and afternoons in schools operating the (double) shift-system.

(10) Regardless of the duration of the school year, the education council can modify the standard timetable provided that the following conditions are met:

- morning classes start between 9 and 10 a.m.;
- the mid-day break is at least one hour;
- afternoon classes do not start before 1 p.m. and the afternoon session is of 2 hours;
- the total length of breaks (i.e. 20 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the afternoon) is not altered; breaks may be divided up according to the needs of the various classes.

(11) Regardless of the length of the school year, the education council may:

- vary the timetable of each of the two sessions by a maximum of 15 minutes, but must provide the obligatory break of 10 minutes between the morning and the afternoon sessions;
- from November until the end of February, reduce to 20 minutes the total length of the breaks in both sessions and shorten the lessons by 15 minutes at the start of the morning and the end of the afternoon.

(12) The school board decides the hours of the school day. The school day is progressively longer each year of the nine years of compulsory education (*grundskola*).

(13) These are typical times for the length of the primary school day. Starting and finishing times are a matter for the headteacher and school governors. The school day might be slightly longer for pupils at Key Stage 2.

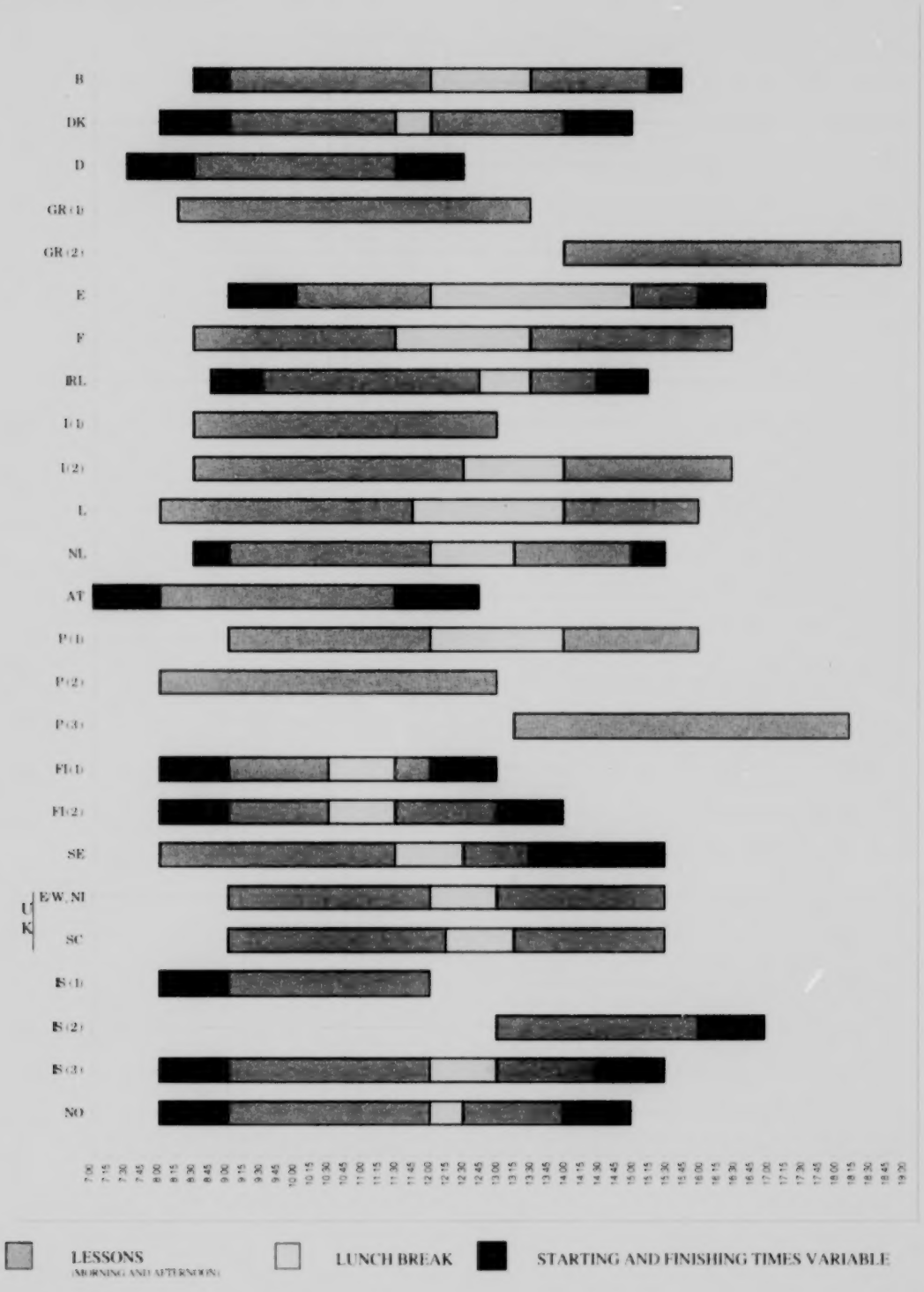
(14) The school day for infants is 30 minutes less.

(15) Figures are based on the general trend, but the organisation of education in Icelandic schools is extremely varied and may differ considerably in rural and urban areas. Numerous schools in Iceland, especially in urban areas, have "staggered" hours, with two shifts, i.e. one portion of the pupils attends school during the earlier part of the day and the others during the latter part of the day.

(16) Schools are free to determine their timetables as long as they fall within the period 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

AVERAGE LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL DAY

PRIMARY EDUCATION



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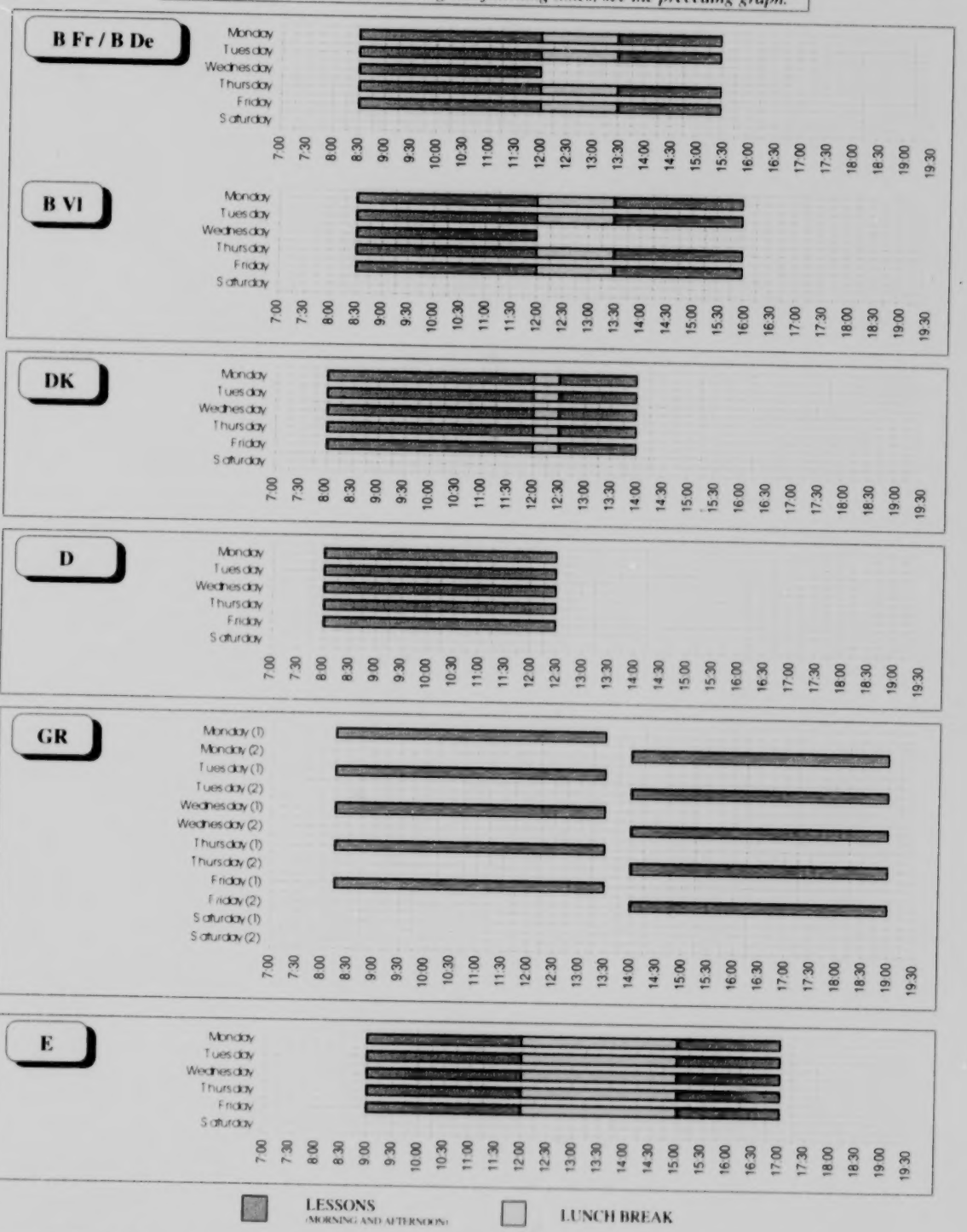
LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL DAY EACH DAY OF THE WEEK

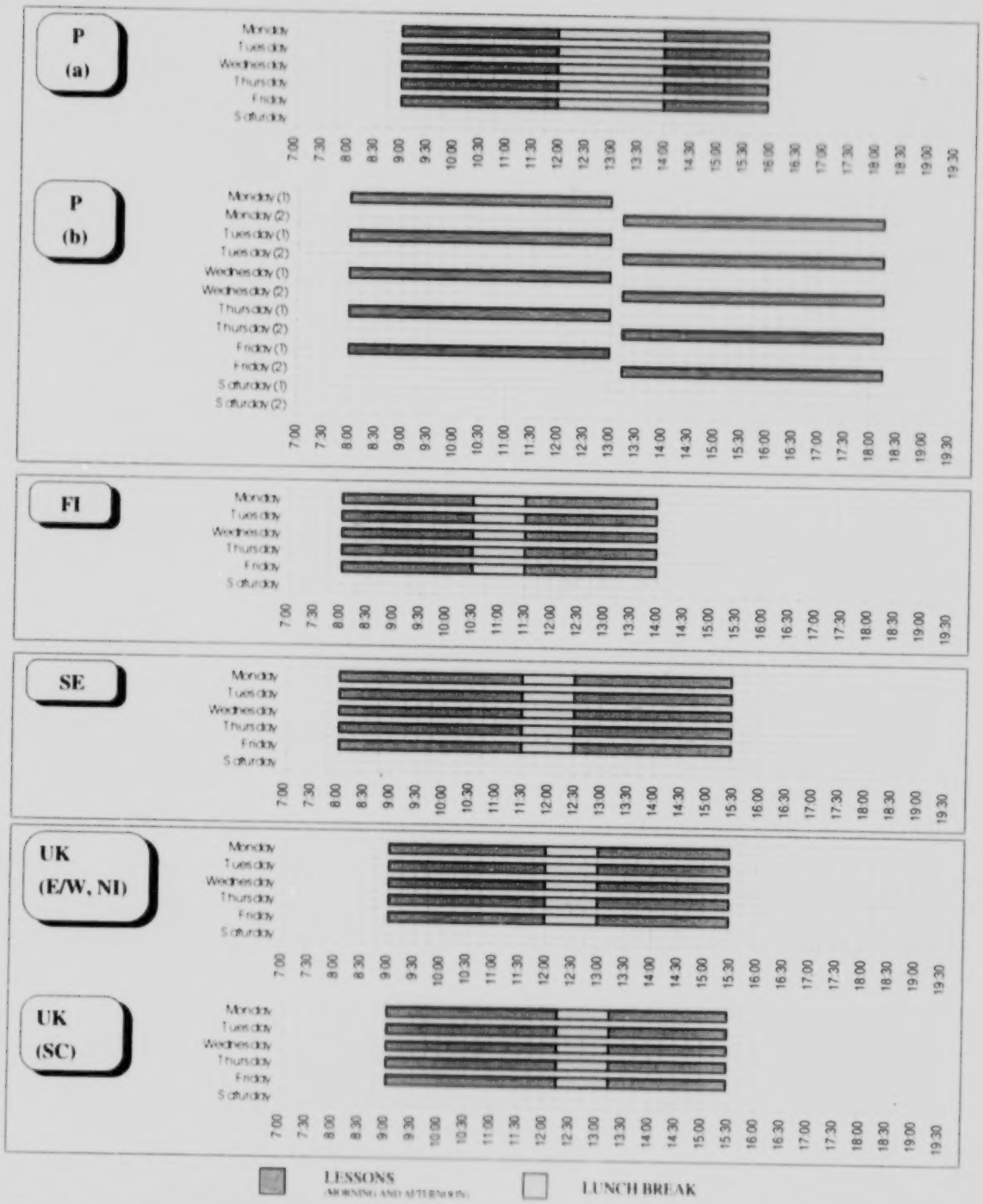
For details of variations in starting and finishing times, see the preceding graph.



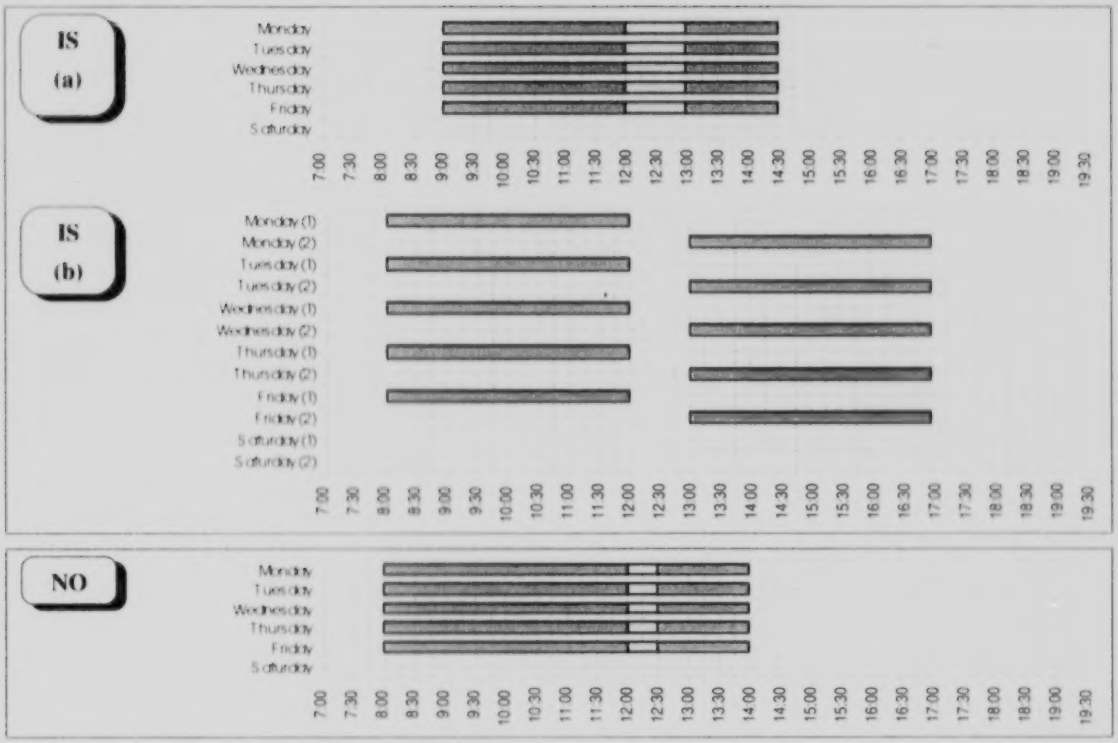
Germany: The graph shows only one possible example. In the *Länder* which have 6-day week, pupils go to school one or more Saturday morning a month.

Greece: Pupils attend lessons either in the morning or in the afternoon, or in the morning one week and the afternoon the following week (see Table IX).

Italy: (a) 6-day week system; (b) 5-day week system (see Table IX).



Portugal: (a) single system; (b) shift-system (see Table IX).
Finland: The length of the lunch break is at least 30 minutes. The schools can decide on the placing of the break.



Iceland: (a) single system; (b) shift-system (see Table IX).

TABLE X - OPENING HOURS OF SCHOOLS (PRIMARY EDUCATION)

MEMBER STATE	
BELGIUM	
FRENCH COMMUNITY	8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) and 8.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.)
FLEMISH COMMUNITY	7.30 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.) and 7.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon (Wed.)
DENMARK (1)	7 a.m. - 5/6 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
GERMANY	7.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. / 2 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri./Sat.). Opening hours are under the responsibility of the schools and are fixed in cooperation with school or outside-school centres providing supervision and care after teaching time. All *Länder* are currently engaged in expanding arrangements for the supervision and care of pupils after school hours (e.g. fixed opening hours between 7.30 a.m. and 1 p.m./2 p.m. or until 4 p.m./5 p.m.).
GREECE (2)	7 a.m. - 4 p.m. (creative activities organised before and after classes, i.e. from 7.00 to 8.15 a.m. and from 12.00 noon p.m. to 4.30 p.m.). The 12.00 noon to 4.30 p.m. arrangement applies where there is no morning programme of creative activities.
SPAIN	Under the responsibility of the local authorities and the school council.
FRANCE	Under the responsibility of the local authorities (*Communes*).
IRELAND	9 a.m. - 2.40 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.)
ITALY	Open 10 minutes before classes (see Table IX). Under the responsibility of the local authorities, out-of-hours provision may be arranged in some schools.
LUXEMBOURG	Open 10 minutes before classes and 10 minutes after they finish (see Table IX).
NETHERLANDS	Opening hours are fixed by the competent authority and vary from one school to another. If parents so wish, the competent authority must offer the possibility for children to stay at school during the midday break (see also note 7, Table IX).
AUSTRIA	7 a.m./7.45 a.m. 12.00 noon/1 p.m.; in the case of afternoon lessons, until 2.45 p.m./3.45 p.m.. The situation may vary from one school to another.
PORTUGAL	Open a few minutes before classes start (see Table IX). Out-of-hours care may be provided in some schools under the responsibility of the local authorities or parents associations.
FINLAND	Varies locally from one school to another. Usually same as the teaching time.
SWEDEN (3)	Same as the teaching time; under the responsibility of the local authorities (municipalities).
UNITED KINGDOM	
ENGLAND AND WALES	Open 10 minutes before classes start and 10 minutes after they finish (see Table IX). At their discretion, schools may arrange activities or supervision for pupils outside these hours.
NORTHERN IRELAND	Open 10 minutes before classes start and 10 minutes after they finish (see Table IX).
SCOTLAND	Not applicable (see Table IX).
ICELAND	Most schools are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (see Tble IX).
NORWAY	7.30 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur., Fri.), in connection with *Skolefritidsordninger - SFO*.

(1) Includes the *SFO* (school leisure-time scheme). Regular classes start at 8 a.m. and end at 12.00 noon-2 p.m. depending on the level of the class. Some schools do however offer leisure-time activities in extension of the ordinary school hours, which may include teaching in practical school subjects.

(2) Data are for some schools only and not for the country as a whole. Creative activities are organised in schools with a large number of pupils both of whose parents are out at work. These activities are provided with the help of grants from the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, the local authorities or parents associations.

(3) If out-of-hours provision is needed, it is arranged in leisure centres located in the same building as the school or nearby. This supervision can be arranged between 6.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

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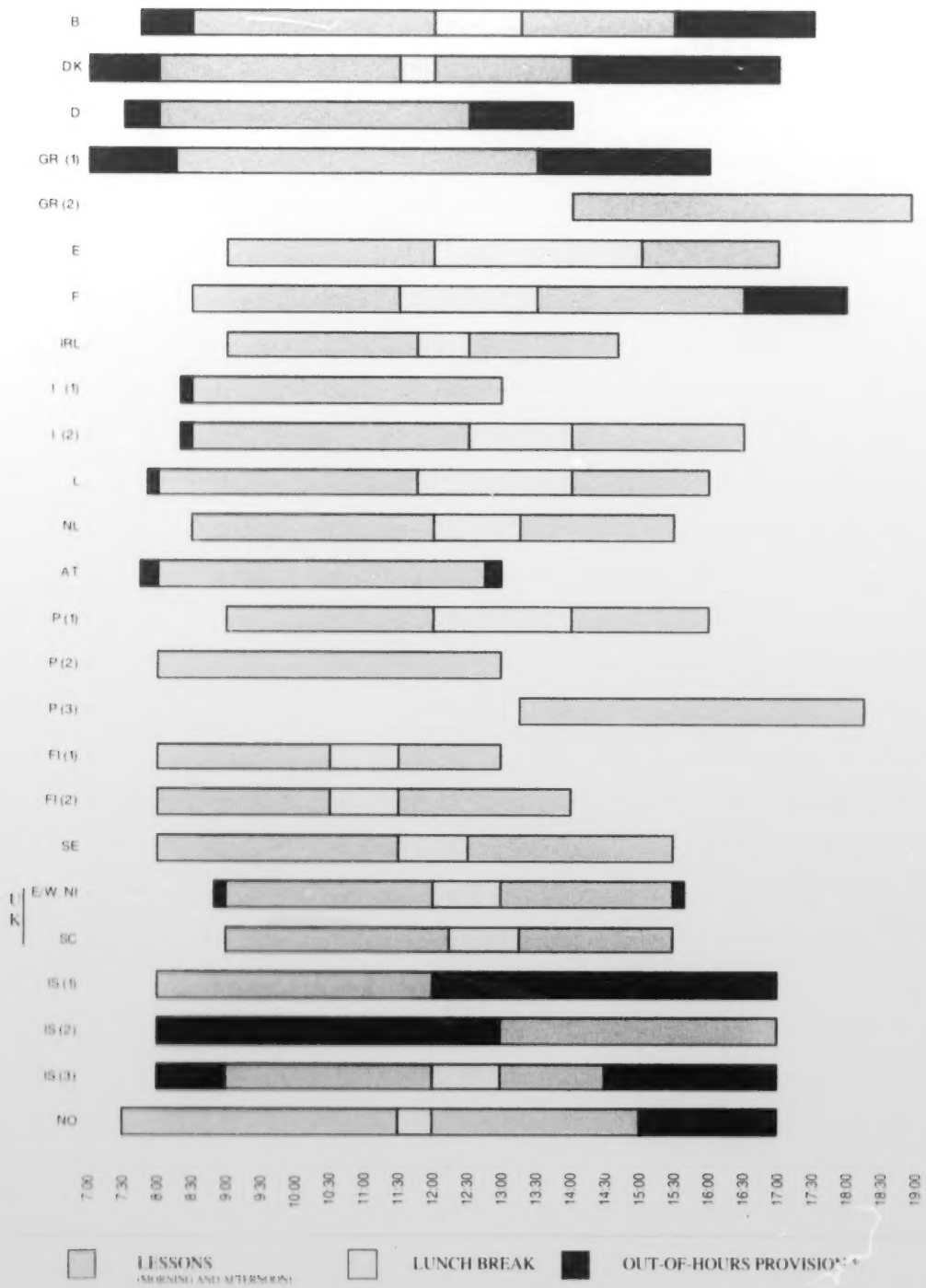
OPENING HOURS OF SCHOOLS
(PRIMARY EDUCATION)



* In Germany and in Iceland, provided in some schools only.

EURYDICE

The European Education Information Network

OBJECTIVES

The role of the EURYDICE network, the European Education Information Network, is to promote the exchange of information on education systems and on national policies in the field of education. It contributes to increasing mutual understanding and cooperation between the 15 Member States of the European Union[1].

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

In 1976, when the Council and the Education Ministers adopted the Resolution on a first programme for cooperation in the field of education, they gave recognition to the importance, in this context, of exchanges of information and experience. It was on this basis that the EURYDICE network was set up and became operational in 1980. Ten years later, in 1990, the Council and the Ministers adopted a Resolution dealing specifically with EURYDICE and calling for a reinforcement of its services. The Treaty of Maastricht (Treaty on European Union) marked an important step forward, providing in the new Chapter 3, Article 126, for developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States. It has thus opened up for EURYDICE new prospects of which the Community education programme, SOCRATES, adopted on 14 March 1995, takes full account (Annex, Chapter III, Action 3, point 2). It is under this Programme that the development of EURYDICE will be assured from now on.

ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES

The network comprises **22 National Units**, most of which are located in the Ministries of Education. The **European Unit**, established by the European Commission, coordinates the network's activities, publications and services. It also promotes exchanges between the National Units to meet the information needs of national and Community policy makers. On the basis of contributions from the network, it produces basic documents and comparative analyses on topics of interest to cooperation at Community level. It is also increasingly called upon to fulfil the role of an "Observatory", in relation to the development of the education systems and policies in the European Union. Through the dissemination of its publications, the EURYDICE network also reaches a wide public in the education world.

SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

- Network question/answer system for policy makers.
- Data bases on the education systems.
- Publications on education in the Member States.

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October 1995

1 Under the Agreement on the European Economic Area, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are participating in the activities of the EURYDICE network in the same way as the Member States of the European Union.

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